

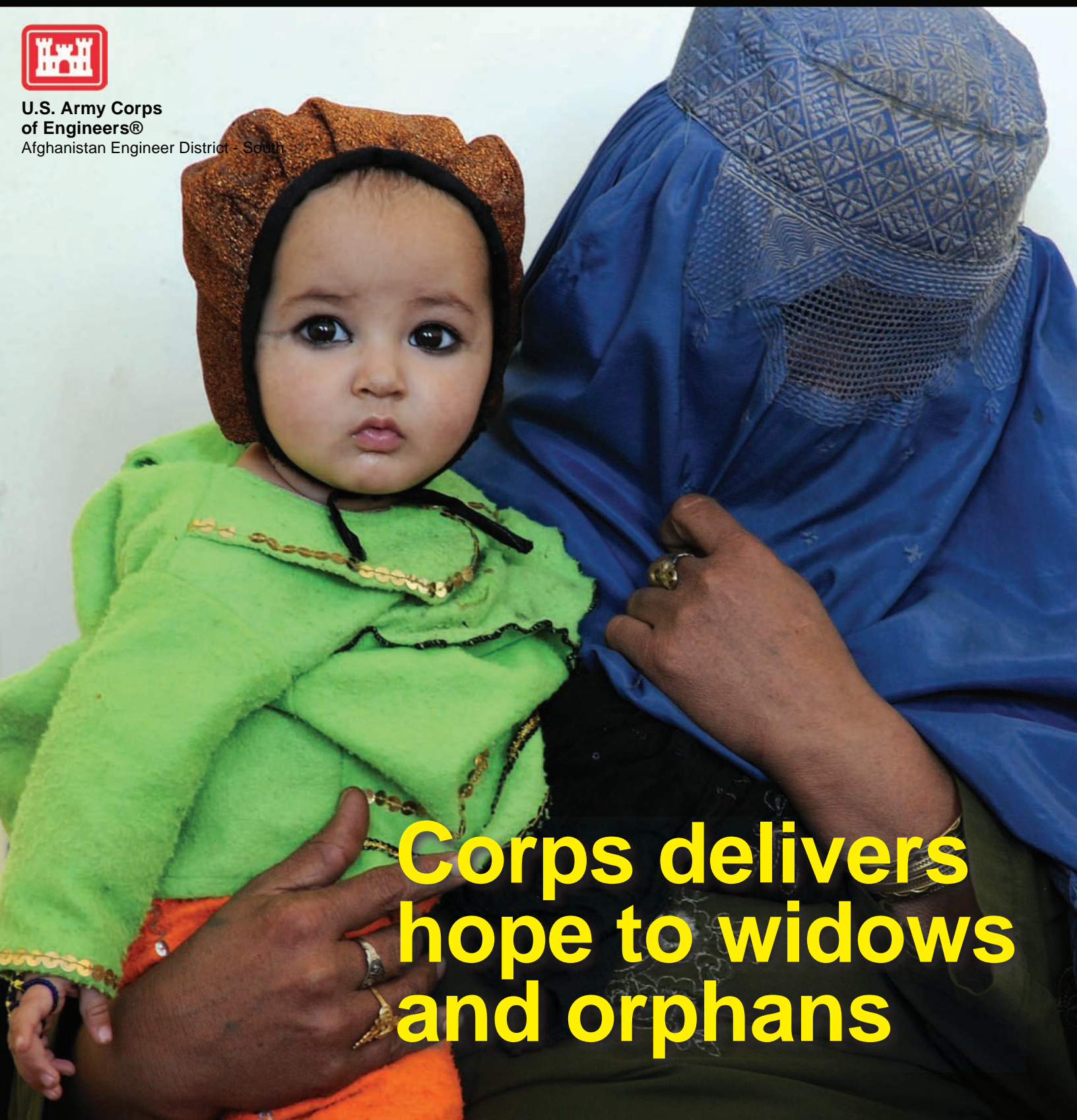
Serving the Afghanistan Engineer District - South

# Engineering Freedom

March/April 2010



**U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Afghanistan Engineer District - South



**Corps delivers  
hope to widows  
and orphans**



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Engineering Freedom is the field magazine of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES); and is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is produced bi-monthly for electronic distribution by the Public Affairs Office, AES. It is produced in the Afghanistan theater of operations.

Views and opinions expressed in the Engineering Freedom are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should arrive in PAO by the 20th of each month preceding publication. They can be mailed to the below address or they can be e-mailed. If electronically submitted, all stories should be in Word document format and all photographs should be high resolution (at least 5x7 inches and 300 dpi) and include photo caption information.

All photographs appearing herein are by the AES Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of Engineering Freedom is to support the Commander's Internal Communication Program for AES. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments, and command philosophy to AES.

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Submissions can be mailed to:  
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*Engineering Freedom*  
is available online at  
[www.aed.usace.army.mil/AES](http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/AES)

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### On the cover ...

Corps partners with Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) to provide clothes, shoes and school supplies to children in Qalat and Farah. See story on page 12. (Photo by Patricia Ryan)





# Commander's message ...

AES Team,

Time flies when you're having fun - there is no question that time is passing quickly, and from what we can see, our team is enjoying their work. You all are doing amazing things and the District could not function without each and every one of you - those here and those on the way!

We continue to grow to meet our \$1 billion fiscal year 2010 program. When the growing pains seem the most intense, ask yourself, when you'll ever have another opportunity to be on the ground floor of developing an organization with a \$1 billion program.

I would ask you to remember that what we do every day, no matter how insignificant it may seem, is building the foundation for the District to serve the people and country of Afghanistan.

There have been a few key events that have occurred in the past two months that provide clear examples of the force multiplier we can be when folks understand what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) brings to the table in a contingency environment.

We have begun deliberate planning for the Ring Road Project, a 213-kilometer roadway in Western Afghanistan that will complete the country's Ring Road. This project will truly be a coalition effort. The road traverses through territory in the west that is currently managed by both U.S. and Coalition nations. The U.S.

Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are going to be involved in the community development that we intend to execute along the road to garner local support and ownership of the project.

The completion of the Ring Road is a high priority effort for the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and will have a substantial impact on the economic stability



Lt. Col. Samantha B. Ross  
Deputy Commander

of Afghanistan, as it will provide increased opportunities for trade and movement between Afghanistan and the "Stans" - Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan - to the north.

We are directly involved in the efforts to improve an eight-kilometer section of the main supply route into Afghanistan via Pakistan, at Weesh-Chaman, near the city of Spin-Boldak. This road and the Border Crossing Facility are critical to processing the vehicle traffic that will be coming in support of the troop surge.

It is definitely exciting to be so directly involved in supporting our troops and the leaders in theater in developing solutions to complex and time-sensitive issues.

We also had a team of great folks study the current power situation in the city of Kandahar. With their knowledge and expertise we prepared a study that is providing a platform for USAID and

the Department of State to evaluate several options to provide counter-insurgency (COIN) efforts in getting power to Kandahar City in the near and long term.

You all are making a difference!

ESSAYONS! 🇺🇸

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***It is definitely exciting  
to be so directly  
involved in supporting  
our troops ...***

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## Command Sergeant Major's message ...

**A**s I am out and about in the District's area of operations meeting people and observing Corps interaction with our Coalition Allies and our Afghan partners, I am constantly reminded of the value of the individual and what each Corps employee brings to the "fight." When I ask what prompted them to volunteer for their tour here, the responses often cover the entire spectrum. But, when I further ask about their personal expectations being fulfilled, some have made the comment that, "reality has come up short." My answer is always "life is never easy" in a combat zone, whether its job

performance or the personal living environment. Watch words to live by are, "adjust, adapt and overcome." We all do it every day whether we realize it or not, but it's constant. Some obstacles may be larger in reality or harder mentally, but we must hold to our core values and attack each in a professional manner.

I truly have met some amazing Corps people during this assignment, people who are always "looking up at the high ground," and who share that enthusiasm with all who they come into contact with. It shows in their work ethics and in how they approach life.

Bottom line to my intent for this article: We are a

Team with a common goal. We are a family sharing our lives with each other. Always keep an eye on those around us and involve everyone. Be aware if someone is alone or struggling.

Take time to talk, to care and include them in an activity. Always remember, we all need a hand sometimes.

See you all "on the high ground." 🇺🇸



**Command Sgt. Maj.  
John S. Werner**

# Afghanistan Safety 101

By Jeff Brewer, AES UXO/Demining Safety Specialist

## ***Unexploded Ordnance clean-up operations coming to full swing around KAF***

**F**or those who roam outside of the wire, insurgence is not the only thing you need to be thinking about, Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) kills more Civilians then landmines!!!!

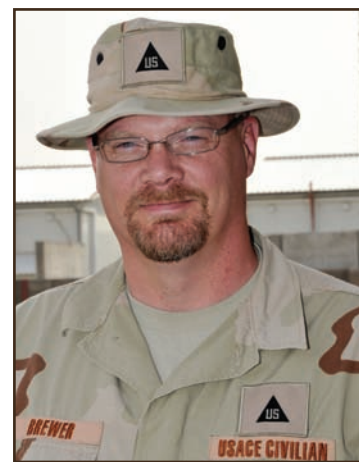
Kandahar Airfield (KAF) is a multi-national militarized airport and support base located next to the city of Kandahar in Southern Afghanistan. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s, the Soviet military battled Afghan rebels and freedom fighters leaving behind a mess of mine fields and unexploded ordnance scattered around KAF and the entire country.

Although Coalition Forces and nongovernment organizations are working extensively to clear the landmines and unexploded ordnance, danger still lurks everywhere in this area that was home to over 20 years of deadly fighting.

Experts estimate that 11 percent of the country is still full of live mines and much more of the area is full of unexploded ordnance.

One of the tragic legacies from this fighting is the millions of people who have been maimed or killed by landmines and unexploded ordnance. A couple of rules to help you stay safe are:

1. Never assume an area is mine or ordnance free. Just because you have seen vehicles driving or troops working in the area does not mean the area is free of mines or ordnance. Mines and ordnance can be buried several feet underground. Look for the marking of a cleared



**Jeff Brewer**



area. Demining organizations leave white rocks or white markings on buildings or piles to show cleared areas.

2. Stay on the paved roads and you have a better chance of not finding mines or unexploded ordnance. If you do have to leave the paved roads, pay attention to your surroundings. Particular things to notice around the work area are disturbed surfaces, dead animals with blast injuries, round, regularly spaced potholes or craters, containers or boxes in the vicinity, mine accessories, and markings such as stacked rocks placed by locals and triangular danger signs placed by coalition forces.

If something appears to be an UXO, "Don't move it or touch it, mark it with a visible object to warn others, record the location and report it accordingly."


They're usually found in the vicinity of all berms (main one and old ones); around wells; around shade trees; around bottlenecks; at the edges of cleared roads and tracks; near abandoned defensive positions; ahead of old and new defensive lines; around any old battlefield; and around natural defensive positions.

When at construction sites where there is

digging or excavating by power equipment in areas that are known to have possible buried UXOs, precautions must be in place beforehand to ensure the safety of all personnel.

Digging should only proceed after the area has been certified by the AES UXO Safety and Demining Office and/or the U.N. Mine Action Center (UNMAC). However, certification by the UNMAC only extends six inches below the surface grade. If your USACE project needs to go below that depth the area will need to be re-cleared to a one-meter depth.

When an unknown metal object or possible UXO is encountered, the contractor must immediately stop all construction activities in the area, evacuate personnel in the vicinity, and block access to the area surrounding the possible explosive. Then USACE and the Explosive Ordnance Disposal must be notified so that necessary steps can be taken to clear the area.

For any demining issues in Regional Command - South and Regional Command - West, please contact AES UXO Demining Safety Specialist Jeff Brewer at 540-722-5305 or Roshan cell 079-948-7559. 

**If you **did not** drop it, **do not** pick it up!**

**UXO, Dud, Training Round, War Trophy, Souvenir**  
**NO MATTER WHAT YOU CALL THEM! THEY CAN BE DEADLY!**

**Learn and Follow the 3Rs**

**RECOGNIZE:** The danger that a souvenir munition poses to yourself, your family and your neighbors

**RETREAT:** Do not disturb, touch or move it  
Do not give or throw it away

**REPORT:** Call 911

**Recognize**  
**Retreat**  
**Report**

[www.denix.osd.mil/uxosafety](http://www.denix.osd.mil/uxosafety)







Laureen Vizcarra (left) celebrates Christmas with her U.S. Army Corps of Engineers coworkers (left to right) Norman Boeman, Maryam Khan, Terry Wallace, Jo Ann Lucas, and Shelly Dzik during an Afghanistan deployment.

# Vizcarra shares Overseas Contingency Operations inspiration

Story by Lacey Justinger, public affairs specialist, Honolulu District

“The moon is beautiful over Kandahar!”

Laureen Vizcarra, a civilian with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District, who volunteered for an Afghanistan deployment, shared her experiences and journal entries between being sent to the bunkers during rocket attacks and performing her everyday duties as a data

manager for the Corps in Afghanistan.

“We want our soldiers to go home safe and sound, but until then, we try to give them a quality-of-life here,” she said.

Vizcarra states the one experience that personified this philosophy was her first ramp ceremony, where people gather to pay respects while

sending a fallen United States service member home with honor.

She describes the ceremony as the singularly most moving moment that she has experienced so far. Uniformed and Civilian, men and women from many different countries marched to the flightline, rendered a salute, and then stood at attention as the





**Laureen Vizcarra dismounts from a Humvee while deployed to Afghanistan with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.**

young sergeant's unit carried his flag-draped coffin past with "graceful fluidity." The song 'Going Home' was played on the bagpipes and followed by 'Taps' on the trumpet.

The chaplain recited Psalm 23 and a short biography. "The night was bitter cold and a cold wind was stirring above us, but it was beautifully solemn and almost cathedral like," said Vizcarra. "I was frozen but somehow I

felt warm. You could not help but be emotional, feel that lump stick in your throat and have tears roll down your face."

Vizcarra said after this experience she will attend all the ramp ceremonies no matter how late at night they are held. "Being here in the place where this conflict is happening, drives all these feelings and philosophies home: it's the least I could

do for what he did for us," she said. "In a place where a rocket attack often sends us to the bunkers, this event put it in a perspective. It gives more meaning to our everyday small responsibilities."

During a six-month deployment at the Afghanistan Engineer District-South, Vizcarra controlled access, provided training, offered troubleshooting guidance and developed a step-by-step weekly training to a resident management system and quality control system database besides teaching courses.

"The aspect of my job that I thrive upon is interacting with so many different nationals from all over the world: Afghanistan, yes, but also Egypt, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Philippines, Kyrgyzstan, India and Pakistan," said Vizcarra. "I even did step-by-step training on the phone with a contractor in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates."

Although she credits her Corps teammates and the Soldiers with helping her face each day.

"It is because of this surprising "MASH-like" cast that I am able to find such meaning and value in what I do," she said. "I can wake up every morning and have the strength to face it, all its tensions and anxieties, because I am surrounded by many people of like mind and purpose." 🇺🇸



# Woman engineers construction

By Christine Hess

## Another Day in Afghanistan

It's a crisp and clear morning as I make the short walk to work. I am glad I have my jacket on, although I may not need it for the walk to lunch. Here in Southern Afghanistan, the temperature swings are significant. Daytime highs may be in the low 60s with nighttime lows in the mid 30s. Despite the fine sand here, and the mud when it rains, I find the environment rather invigorating. There is a rugged beauty in this land. The sky is vast, the mountains are jagged but quite magnificent, and the stars at night have a clarity that is most inviting. Even with my limited experience, here I can sense the depth and history this place carries. Kandahar is foreign to me, yet somehow has a sense of familiarity. It is a land of paradoxes and of culture clash; a true crossroads in time. Recently on a site visit we passed a dreadfully decrepit apartment building, but it was equipped with numerous satellite dishes. What a contrast!

Kandahar Air Field (KAF) is a busy place – it is the largest NATO base in the world and has a population of roughly 20,000 inhabitants. My extended backyard is literally an airfield with all types of planes, jets and helicopters coming and going constantly. Apparently KAF is as busy as London's Gatwick Airport.

Here in Kandahar, I am working on mostly military construction projects: barracks, dining facilities, roads, infrastructure, and various projects that support the troops and base operations.

## An International Operation

Including military, Civilians, and contractors, roughly 40 nations work at KAF. In addition to every-day operations and support, many different nations are involved in construction of various projects, both on and off the base. Coordination

among the stakeholders is critical. We meet weekly with our counterparts to review and discuss ongoing and upcoming projects, and any issues that may arise, or areas where we can learn from others' experiences. Meetings are conducted in English and I am always impressed with the mastery of technical terms the non-native English speakers seem to have.

Dining facilities and their menu choices are reflective of the international population. I for one enjoy the Shepherd's Pie, the variety of curry, and treacle tart. However, every so often I do like to get a Whopper from Burger King. It is not quite the same as back home, and they are sometimes out of beef patties, but it is still a nice treat.

## Working Environment

Our work force here at the Corps office is a dynamic mix of both military and Civilians, active duty and reservists, all representing a wealth of background and experience, and of course, distinctively different personalities. And yet somehow this diverse group is able to come together and bring out their very best. I am continually amazed at the synergy and the positive dynamics here.

The schedule here is intense: we work seven days a week, and long hours each day. With the planned surge, our workload for facilities to support the troops will only become more aggressive. The pace is demanding, but many of us thrive on that. I am reminded of the projects we did in architecture school. Being here is like being on one long charette. There is a certain pride in pushing yourself beyond your perceived boundaries.

## Why Afghanistan?

I am often asked why I came here. Before Kandahar, I spent two years in Iraq working in a variety of places, on a variety of assignments, working with the Corps of Engineers on construction as well as capacity development projects. It is a very different lifestyle that is definitely for those with a sense of adventure and a curious, inquisitive nature. Yet as things wound down in Iraq, I found myself looking eastward and longing for that next chapter, for new experiences; experiences that will impact who I am and the way I



Photo by Patricia Ryan

**Christine Hess**



Courtesy Photo

**The rugged, majestic mountains in Southern Afghanistan.**



view the world.

I think the answer to the question “why are you here” is different for each individual, but I believe there are some common things we are all looking for in this assignment, whether we realize it or not.

One is the desire to serve. I thought long about joining the reserves but left it until late in life. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, we work along side the military, and in Afghanistan we wear a uniform six days a week. Many of my friends on base just assume I am in the Army. We live in barracks and eat in the chow hall alongside the Soldiers and officers from many other nations. I think this is as close to being in the military as you can get without actually signing up, and I most definitely feel like I am serving.

Second is the desire to be part of something bigger – some greater good that will have lasting meaning, and meaning with significance. When I was in Iraq, many days I felt like a humanitarian aid worker. Here in Kandahar my opportunity to interact with the locals is limited, but the work I do on base – military construction – will support the troops and the mission. There is a lot of positive energy among the group here that fosters teamwork and unity, and I think it comes from an underlying belief in what we do, as well as a belief that we are making a difference here.

## Being a Woman in Construction – in a War Zone

Throughout the base there are women Soldiers, officers, and Civilians from many countries, all working in various capacities. Women are still outnumbered by men, but when you work in a largely male industry, I think eventually you stop seeing people as male or female and simply see them as peers and colleagues. All of my adult life, I have worked in or around construction. I honestly no longer notice that I am often the only woman on a project or in an office or at a meeting. However on a job-site here, I am very often not only the lone woman, but also the only Western woman. The crews of our construction companies are typically



Photo by Patricia Ryan

**A site visit “outside the wire” requires wearing our protective gear.**

non-Western so I am definitely an anomaly. But wherever I have gone, I have always felt welcome, accepted, and with time, valued. Also I lived in Turkey for a few years and my Turkish is still pretty good, so I have the opportunity to converse with the folks from the Turkish construction companies and even do some translation. That is challenging, but definitely interesting, and I think helps build good rapport. As far as a touch of softness or femininity, I find myself enjoying putting on a splash of color of makeup in this desert environment, and I also like to wear puffy “scrunchies” - khaki color, of course, to comply with the uniform code.

## Challenges and Satisfaction

Every day here we are challenged with typical construction issues, as well as issues unique to this environment: security, intense weather, availability as well as skilled work crews, not to mention logistics for delivery of materials and equipment. Every day we also find tremendous satisfaction in the work that we do. Construction is about thinking creatively and solving challenges, and when you find solutions to huge challenges, it is incredibly rewarding.

It is also very satisfying to know that the work we do directly and indirectly supports our reason for being here. The facilities we build will house troops, give them dining halls, office space, as well as expand the infrastructure of the base for power, water and waste water. Indirectly, we support the Afghan community by offering not only employment, but on-the-job training, giving people skill sets that they will keep forever. There are also numerous projects we are building “outside the wire,” such as schools, clinics, enhancements to water and power supply, and road improvements. All of these projects can become a very solid foundation for the future of Afghanistan as this place becomes strong from the inside out.

I am very proud to be a woman in construction and I am very proud to support the Corps in its mission here.



Courtesy Photo

**Pre-engineered components help us expedite construction.**



# Corps assesses Kandahar Airfield flood damages

Story by Brenda Beasley, photos by Nathan Epps and Leslie Crawford

Responding to floods is nothing new to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We've been responding to natural disasters since flooding along the Mississippi River in 1865. So, when Kandahar Airfield (KAF) experienced a rainfall event Feb. 7 measuring 15.4 millimeters of accumulation over a 12-hour period, the Corps stepped in and assessed the flood damages.

The following day, the Corps' Afghanistan Engineer District – South, team of Leslie Crawford, Nathan Epps, and Christine Hess investigated the damages resulting from this event.

KAF is located near the convergence of four rivers about 10 kilometers south of Kandahar City. The area is typified by flat topography with minimal slope. To the south of KAF, the terrain slopes at approximately 0.4 percent. Soils in the area are predominantly fines, according to the Corps team. When dry, these soils have very little strength and are generally referred to as "moon dust." When wet, the soil forms a hard, impermeable layer. As a result, during rain events, very little rainfall is absorbed into the soil and most of the rainfall becomes surface runoff.

The investigative team surveyed a representative sample of project locations and areas of interest around KAF. In general, flooding was observed in the south and west portions of KAF with the worst inundation at the western aprons along Flightline Road, stated the team. In several areas, sediment-laden water overtopping the roads obscured the edge, causing many vehicles to drive off the road. "We encountered many vehicles stuck in ditches," said the team.

Specific observations reported by the team included erosion along the flight line road. The south ramp was inundated. A box culvert along the flight line was submerged and water flowed over the west perimeter road, causing erosion of the west shoulder. Scouring was found near



**Damage to the North shoulder of Flightline Road near the South ramp project.**



**Inundation on the west edge of the project. Possible high water mark indicated on the vehicle tires.**

the outfalls of the channels along the western perimeter, because the concrete channels installed at South Park were not large enough to carry the flow. The project site for an interim Waste Water Treatment Plant was flooded.

The Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) compound was flooded one to two feet. Soldiers who were living at the RSOI that the team spoke with said that the floor slab was not flooded and the inside of the






**Flow diversion over the west perimeter road caused significant scouring on the west shoulder.**



**The outfalls were flowing slowly at the main culvert under the west perimeter road. The intake is likely clogged with debris.**

building remained dry. Rainwater ponded in the inverts of the base between paving sections

at a new concrete ramp. High flows along the southern edge of the Ammunition Supply Point causing scour damage around the box culverts. Erosion of the ASP berm filled in portions of the northern ditch along the utility corridor. The road was overtopped during the event and scour and rutting were present at all intersections.

While this is not one of the largest or most destructive disasters that the Corps has responded to since 1865, it is definitely one that can have a major impact on operations in a combat zone. It's a serious issue that should be considered during the planning and design phases of a base. "Flooding is not a phenomenon one typically expects in a desert environment," said Christine Hess. "People that are only here when it is hot and dry may never realize the severity or impact of the rain." 



# Corps delivers hope to widows and orphans

Story and photos by Patricia Ryan, PAO

**W**hen Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES) Construction Representative Rick Durham arrived at his post in the city of Qalat last year, the first thing he asked the leaders of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) he was working with is “what do the people need the most?” Since then Rick has personally coordinated the distribution of more than 950 pairs of shoes.

The most recent shoe event was Feb. 19 where some of the boxes of clothing from former AES Engineering and Construction Chief Andy Adams were handed out to needy widows and their children along with 247 pairs of Durham’s shoes. His primary job is inspecting PRT construction sites in Zabul Province to ensure contract



PRT Medic Sarah Saelens gives support to a widow in Qalat who received shoes along with the three children she had with her.

compliance and quality control. Durham started this humanitarian “shoes for kids” effort with his

wife Tish who purchases and ships the shoes from the United States to him in Qalat, where he repackages





**Air Force Capt. Greg Orbino and Capt. Lupu from the Romanian Army both assigned to the Zabul PRT, team up to tie new shoes on this toddler in the arms of his grateful mother.**



**Rick Durham poses with a father and seven of his eight children who all received new shoes.**



**PRT Capt. and Dr. De Arman shows the bottoms of the worn out shoes that she just replaced with some new tennis shoes for this widow in Qalat, Zabul Province.**



them and coordinates the giveaway events with the PRT.

Care packages of school supplies and clothing goods from Adams were delivered by AES Public Affairs Officer Patricia Ryan in coordination with the Farah and Zabul Provinces PRTs. The boxes delivered to Farah were handed-off to Governor Rohullah Amin, local officials and orphanage staff to hand out to the children who were thrilled to receive the gifts.

Andy Adams redeployed Dec. 2009 before he had the opportunity to deliver the boxes of school supplies and clothing which had been sent to him from friends back home in New York. Thanks to AES employees working with the PRTs in Farah and Zabul, the school supplies

and clothing items are now in the hands of the families and kids who need them the most.

The PRTs work with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and local officials to distribute the goods in order for the people to get used to the idea that the Afghan government is looking after them – not foreign aid. It is part of the process of getting Afghanistan on its feet and supporting the concept of independence and sustainability for future growth and progress under the leadership of the Afghan government. 🇦🇫



Unfortunately, the Corps did not have enough shoes for all children in need and has plans to distribute more shoes in the future. They did enjoy receiving candy and treats from the Soldiers.









# Corps teaches flight line paving

Story and photos by Patricia Ryan

A team from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Transportation Systems Center (TSC) based at the Omaha District, provided Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES) engineers and Afghan contractors the mandatory Portland cement concrete (PCC) and hot mix asphalt (HMA) pavement training that is required in support of the execution of AES flight line construction projects Feb. 1-3.

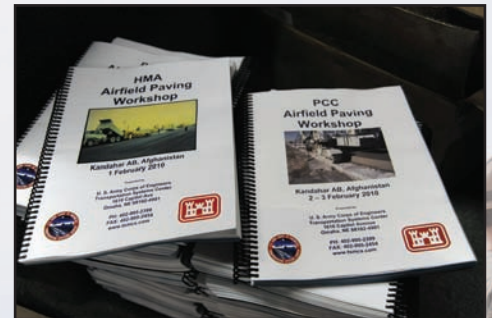
"According to the Military Construction Management Policy for Airfield Pavement Projects, all airfield projects costing greater than \$5 million require this class," said Terry Sherman, TSC director and class instructor.

Sherman and TSC Engineer Jack Scott provided three days of classroom training including a visit to the Kandahar Airfield flight line to discuss runway extension and ramp

paving projects underway. They stressed the importance of good quality construction from start to finish and the class covered all aspects of paving construction including lessons learned.

"We include tips and insights to constantly improve the inspection process so problems can be identified early on which saves time and money," said Sherman. "Crews have to practice and constantly check on everything during all aspects of construction.

As new people come into the industry, they benefit from this training, and as they gain experience



Terry Sherman discusses quality control details with AES Quality Assurance Representatives Derland Ellison and Terry Wallace.



they will pass it on to new engineers, contractors, materials testing personnel and inspectors.”

Providing expertise in the planning, design, construction, evaluation and criteria development of military airfields, roads, and railroads is what the TSC specializes in. Sherman and his team travel throughout the

world to construction project sites as needed to provide the training. The TSC also provides continuity, standardization and technical excellence within the Army and USACE in order to satisfy Department of Defense customer requests and construction projects. 🇺🇸



**Classroom at KAF MWR where Jack Scott explains technical points on quality inspection processes.**



**Jack Scott discusses the paving class and inspection process with AES Commander Col. Kevin J. Wilson and Command Sgt. Maj. John Werner. In the background (left to right), Jeff Armstrong, Derland Ellison, Terry Wallace and Terry Sherman discuss the dowels on the concrete pavement strip they are standing on.**



**Contractors from the Contrack International, Inc., discuss questions that were raised by the TCS team on site at a KAF flight line project.**



# Riley visits Herat

By Lt. Col. George R. LeBoeuf

Army Central Command (ARCENT) Senior Engineer Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, visited Herat Feb. 4 to meet with the U.S. Forces - Afghanistan (USFOR-A), Regional Command - West (RC-W) Detachment Commander Col. Alan Baker. Riley made stops at various facilities throughout Herat, including Camp Arena – home of the RC-W detachment and Camp Stone, which is adjacent to the Afghan National Army's (ANA) 207th Corps Headquarters on Camp Zafar. Camp Stone is the forward operating base (FOB) for several units stationed in RC-W, including the Herat Area Office (AO) of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Afghanistan Engineer District – South (AES). Riley's visit to Camp Stone included a briefing on the Herat Area Office and the project portfolio administered by AES.

Following the briefing, Riley joined the Herat AO – Officer in Charge (OIC) Lt. Col. George R. LeBoeuf, Noncommissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) Sgt. Maj. Terry D. Woosley and Project Engineer Kenny Pham on a tour of the Central Command (CENTCOM) funded Regional Counter-Narcotics FOB, an AES project. This facility, when complete will house U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents working side by side and mentoring Afghan counter-narcotics agents. Pham is the project engineer representing AES for contract administration and construction management.



**Left to Right: Kenny V. Pham, Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, and Sgt. Maj. Terry D. Woosley.**

Pham is a member of the famous Pham family, who are widely known to those serving with the Corps in Afghanistan. His brothers Alan and Harry both worked in Kabul at one time or another, serving in a variety of roles. Currently, Alan is a project manager for the Afghan National Police (ANP) Program, which focuses on future ANP projects throughout Afghanistan. Kenny has been part of the Herat AO for nearly a year.


Meeting with and accompanying Riley was a special treat for Woosley as well. Woosley is part of the AES team as a “retiree recall.” In order to obtain published orders for this assignment a waiver allowing service as a retiree recall was necessary. It was Riley, while serving

as the Deputy Commander of the Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C., who signed the waiver authorizing Woosley's tour.

Woosley retired from the Army after 37 years of service in 2005. His experience can hardly be questioned. He has already served one tour in Afghanistan with the Corps. In 2002 and 2003, Woosley was among the first members of the former Transatlantic Command to come to Afghanistan. At that time he was assigned to Winchester, Va., as an operations sergeant. As the requirement for USACE services arose, Woosley was there to serve. He came to Kabul in a construction role working alongside USACE Civilians and military standing up the first district. He remembers his days visiting Policharki and other prominent Kabul sites well. For those now familiar with Qalaa House, headquarters for Afghanistan Engineer District - North (AEN), this tour of duty was before Qalaa house got started.

More than seven years later, Woosley is again in Afghanistan providing exceptional logistics and force protection expertise to the Herat AO. Hosting Riley on a tour of an important construction project in Herat was a highlight for him and, of course, the office was thrilled to have a significant general officer visit a site.

The general conducted other business that day also, hosting the initial meeting of the RC-W Development Board. This new organization is made up of Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) personnel, working with key coalition units conducting critical operations in RC-W. Coalition units include the U.S. Army's 4th BCT, 82nd Airborne Division, and USACE and USMC units, alongside Italian and Spanish Soldiers serving with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Of note is the fact that the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) for Herat Province is an Italian Army Brigade. The Development Board hopes to synchronize and lead the many and diverse investments being made in the region by all the organizations. The focus is to ensure that the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), PRT, USACE, or USAID or any other mechanism achieves not only the primary intent of the project, but fits into an overarching goal for capacity development, economic stability and security for Afghans throughout the region. USACE, because of their extensive project portfolio in RC-W, focused primarily on Afghan National Security Forces facilities, was included as a founding member.

It is an exciting time to be in Afghanistan and conducting operations for Operation Enduring Freedom. When distinguished visitors like Maj. Gen. Riley are in the area of operations and make time to see the tremendous effort put forth by USACE personnel – it becomes all the more memorable. 



# Unsung Heroes



1. Staff Sgt. Kwasi Gyamfi manages the many vehicles as well as issuing the required government drivers licenses in order to keep things moving at here at KAF. He deals with keeping the vehicles running and all the issues associated with this important task.

2. Sgt. 1st Class Alfred Weaver - Currently deployed to FOB Apache in Zabul Province, supports AES collecting data from road construction projects and serving as a force protection gunner when Corps Civilian workers go into local communities for project work. If a situation is deemed too dangerous for Civilians to venture outside the wire, Weaver goes in with the Security Liaison Teams to gather data for status reports on project progress.

3. Terry L. Guagliano handles all of our District's facility maintenance issues. From maintenance problems to loaning tools, to driving nails, to electrical issues, to plumbing issues ... you name it and Terry knows how to fix it - ensuring that our team members keep on moving forward with our mission. Most importantly, he also teaches a team of local nationals how to do the work.





## POSTCARD FROM SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN

### An Adventure Fulfilled

When I first received the call requesting that I consider returning to Afghanistan for a fourth tour, I could not conceive what if any value I could actually add in helping the Corps of Engineers accomplish its ongoing mission here. Little did I know that this would turn out to be the greatest, most fulfilling adventure of all of the deployments I had been a part of. Not only would I have the honor of being present at the birth of a new District - The Afghanistan Engineer District - South, but I would also once again be a part of establishing a new section - The Quality Assurance Branch (QAB).

The challenges were great, but with a team of five engineers and technicians, we were able to build the infrastructure for quality assurance that the new District could build on and measure progress with. The functions of the QAB are to develop and update the District Quality Assurance Plan, perform Construction Management Evaluations (CME) of Resident Field Offices, provide technical assistance to the field offices, assist the field offices in developing Supplemental (job specific) Quality Assurance Plans, conduct Construction Quality Management (CQM) training for the contractor's Quality Control Staff, Lab Testing and Certification, and assist in Quality Assurance material testing. We are also required to track and perform Bidability, Constructability, Operability, and Environmental (BCOE) reviews of pre-awarded projects. New challenges that have been added to the QAB functions

are developing a Quality Assurance training program for COE personnel, a training curriculum for our Local National Quality Assurance Representatives (LNQAR), and to establish a training program that takes advantage of the exportable Prospect Training Courses developed by the USACE Learning Center at Huntsville. We facilitated the quarterly AE/RE/OIC/LNO Conference held this past December, and we are hosting an Airfield Paving Workshop for all of the runway projects in February.

What has made this such a challenging adventure is that this enormous program was developed from concept, complete with Standard Operating Procedures, and implemented in the field in less than a year. The payback, which has been tremendous, was in seeing a better understanding from local contractors of Corps of Engineers contracting and construction guidelines, principles and practices; and in seeing the growth in knowledge and skills of non COE volunteers that came to serve. And finally in seeing standards being developed and instituted in areas of the country where there were none.

I will always be grateful to and proud of the men and women of the Afghanistan Engineer District - South that I had the honor to serve with. I vowed before, and vow again, that no matter where I am, or what I am called to do, I will always champion the cause of the USACE mission here in Afghanistan.

If you would like to serve or know of someone who is interested in serving, please visit our website at <http://www.aed.usace.army.mil/aes> (smile)!!!





## POSTCARD FROM SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN

### Improving Quality of Life

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Timothy Linder  
QA for ANA garrison upgrades  
Afghanistan Engineer District - South

I've been assigned to the Afghanistan Engineer District - South for four months now. I'm here on a six-month tour and I'm working at the Tombstone Resident Office in Helmand Province as a plumbing quality assurance (QA) representative for the Afghan National Army (ANA) garrison upgrades. Previously I was a QA at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Dwyer.

Here at Tombstone, I work with local nationals and go out and inspect their construction work. I discuss safety issues and work ethics. Sometimes there's a language barrier, but I'm fortunate enough to work with a local national quality assurance (LNQA) representative who attended an American-certified school and speaks English very well. When on the sites, I'll point out what I see to be a problem area and the LNQA translates for me. Sometimes I even ask him to translate the signs that are posted on the ANA Soldier's

billeting doors. They usually have the Soldier's name written on them or they say "do not enter."

Their culture is vastly different from ours. I'm told that while the lower ranking Soldiers sleep on their bunk beds, the higher ranking Soldiers put their mattresses on the floor. This is their way of not appearing to be perceived as being "above" the others in stature, but all being on the same level.

When I see how some of the ANA Soldiers live, it makes me really appreciate what I have at home. I'm working on projects that are providing heating and air conditioning for their barracks, improving their dining facility, and building a fitness center and a soccer field. With temperatures here that range from 125 degrees Fahrenheit in the summers to as low as 20 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter, I'm proud to be here helping to improve the quality of life for the Afghan Soldier.





# News briefs

## Credit/Debit Card Theft

*From SSG Lourdes M. Caamaño*

The KAF U.S. Military Police have noticed a spike in credit/debit card information theft & fraudulent charges. Their investigation is ongoing; meanwhile they are **STRONGLY** encouraging you to **AVOID** using your personal credit or debit card at KAF.

Don't be a victim!!!

## New Travel Procedures

*From Blair Nipper*

Please use your administrative assistant to facilitate your travel requests.

To better serve our Customers, new procedures are being implemented for the Travel Process. When completing your travel packet, please send your entire packet including your time sheets and OPM Form 71 for Civilians, or respective leave form from your service component for military, to your Admin Support. The Travel Office will be the final stop for your paperwork after it has been signed by all in your rating chain and by the leave approval authority. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact your section, division, or office administrative personnel or our travel specialist.

## Transition from NSPS: Communication

The re-designed DoD NSPS Web site has been reorganized to provide information for employees who are working in NSPS and will transition out of the system, and its streamlined content provides convenient access to the latest information. Key features include a new NSPS Transition Page and the GS-101 course to assist employees in learning about

the General Schedule system. The Web site also features a feedback page where employees have an opportunity to provide comments and suggestions on Web content. Please encourage managers to publicize the site and advise employees to check the site frequently for additional information as implementation planning continues. The direct link to this site is <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/> -- we also link to this site from the Army NSPS Web site on CPOL -- (<http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/repeal.html>).

## General Access to the TAS Intranet

*From Jack Wooten*

I am pleased to announce the general availability of the TAS Intranet. Please read the following carefully to ensure you do not get confused or have difficulty, with the caveat that the TAS Internet site is a work in progress. Some areas are populated and some are not. As SharePoint is designed to be a workspace for collaboration between the USACE team as a whole, content is the responsibility of each department and the users that work with the data. Thus the content will build slowly as need and operational tempo allow. Just because an area is not populated, does NOT reflect that department's commitment to SharePoint.

It most likely means they are just busy. Admittedly, as you access the site, things may be a little rough for the short-term.

First, you MAY need your Microsoft password from UPASS. If you are prompted to log in, enter your Microsoft user name (e.g. N2AESABC) and your

Microsoft password. If you are denied access, it is most likely because you have either forgotten your password or it has expired. If it has expired, you will have to create a new password in UPASS and then wait for up to two hours before trying again to access SharePoint. If you try right away, you can invalidate your password all over again. So be patient and just give it two hours before trying again. The default Web site in your browsers are set by a login script set by TAC. Currently that script has not been changed. Please save the following in your favorites for reference.

If you are not a site owner:

... and located at Kandahar use the following link: <http://tasreplica.tad.usace.army.mil/>

... and located at a FOB use the following link: <http://tasintranet.tad.usace.army.mil/>

Any questions or concerns should be sent to **TAS**.

[SharePoint@usace.army.mil](mailto:SharePoint@usace.army.mil).

Thanks to all that have helped to bring the TAS Intranet to its current state. There is still so much more to be done!!!

## Flag Protocol

*From Karen Anderson*

Requests for flying flags are to be submitted to the Executive Office; either in person or via e-mail. There is an established team of individuals who will ensure your flags are flown. You need to present the flag to the Executive Office with a requested date for flying the flag. To the extent possible, the team will ensure the flag is flown on the requested date. Once flown, the flag will be returned to you or you may come to the Executive Office to pick it up. We ask that



you work with your respective administrative support specialist in developing/creating the certificate. I will provide sample copies to all admin which contain various pictures. You do not have to use one that is already developed if you prefer to create your own. The respective admin can process the certificate and submit it to the Executive Office for appropriate signatures.



## WORK TOGETHER TO REDUCE WASTE



## We All Have a Duty Blue Bins for Cans and Bottles

### Statement of Charges/Cash Collection Voucher

*SGT Marie Vernon, Supply NCO*

Effective immediately Units/Companies needing to replace lost meal cards/laundry bags will have to bring a statement of charges or cash collection voucher, already processed, before a replacement will be issued. Cost of these items is \$5.00 per meal card and \$15.00 per laundry bag. Without the cash collection voucher or statement of charges, replacements will not be issued.

This applies to all organizations falling under the U.S. military and U.S. sponsored contractors. As a further reminder, when drawing cards or bags, a current personnel report showing the number of personnel in the unit/company will be provided by the organization.

The current cost being charged by NAMS for replacement laundry bags is \$15 and meal cards are \$5. These costs will be the responsibility of the unit

commander who signed for the items. No items will be replaced or units cleared from Kandahar Airfield until the DD-362 is processed through finance.

The following is the procedure for preparing a Statement of Charges and Cash Collection Voucher for lost, stolen, or destroyed meal cards and laundry bags:


1. The commander, commander's representative, or company representative will sign for all meal cards and laundry bags for the organization. It is highly recommended that the individual hand receipt these items to the individual level.

2. If an individual's meal card or laundry bag is lost, stolen, or destroyed (meal cards bent or broken constitutes destroyed), a DD-362 Statement of Charges/Cash Collection Voucher must be processed. The individual, their commander, or company representative is responsible for replacing the item.

3. To replace the items listed above, contractors will utilize the Cash Collection Voucher and for U.S. Military personnel a DD-362 Statement of Charges or the DD-200 Financial Liability Investigation for Property Loss.

4. The corporate or unit representative who signed for the property will prepare the form DD-362 and ensure the liable party signs the document.

5. The corporate representative will ensure the individual who lost/destroyed the item pays the replacement cost and the form DD-362 is properly annotated. The unit Supply Sergeant will process the DD-362 through their S-4/G-4 and then Finance for payment or line of accounting.

6. Once a copy of the processed DD-362 or DD-200 is brought to the 649th RSG Supply and Services office, a replacement item will be issued. 



# ON THE MOVE

## Moving in



Rodolfo  
Posis



Joseph  
Moyer



Stephanie  
Dupey



Leslie  
Crawford



Trevor  
Kough



Brian  
Johnson



MSG David  
Heidke



Maj. Albert  
Soliz



Roger  
Nowicki



Roy Devine



Michael  
Bockman



Jesse Boyer



Michael  
Doty



John Segon



Carlos  
German-  
Guzman



Theodore  
Champine



Darrell Ling



Randall  
Chong



Thomas  
Howes



Ezra  
Abraham



Portia  
Stage



Jessica  
Cherms



Timothy  
Taylor



David  
Winand



Gil Kim



Andrew  
Borden



Andy  
Stewart



SSG Lourdes  
Caamano



Marion Dye



Thomas  
Devlin



Gary Weiler



Patrick  
Anderson



Viorel Florea



Jamie  
Determann



William  
Fitzgerald



Fortunado  
Sapida



Paul Hicks



Laurel  
Stevens



Allen  
Sebastian



Elizabeth  
Bertoglio

## Moving out

Kenneth Parker  
CAPT William Figueroa  
Laureen Vizcarra  
Maryam Khan  
Alexander Alvira  
Denice Quinn  
Mark Clark  
SSGT Lloyd Canieso  
George Edgington

Kevin Anderson  
Mark Ruszczyk  
Robert Derrane  
Koufra Girven  
Glen Justis  
Patricia Lora

### Photos unavailable at press time:

MAJ Michael Odett, Geneva Brown, Woodie Hemmingway, Samer Safweh, Stanley Clark, SSG Raymond Swank, Patrick Huff, William Brown, Jesse McKee, and Gary Birge.